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brown, or black; tu-ruru, moving, the change of the r to t being for euphony. The translation of the whole word would be, the breathing mouth of wood with the dark moving feathers. The other stem was named Hahak'takaru, from ra, the, this one; hak, from hakkow, breathing mouth of wood; taka, white; ru, from ruru, moving or swaying. The translation of the whole word would be, the breathing mouth of wood with the white moving or waving feathers.

Associated with these two feathered stems, and sharing with them the prominent place in the rites, was an ear of white corn. In addition there were required two small, round, straight sticks from the plum tree; a crotched stick, also of the plum tree; feathers from the tail of an owl and from the wings and tail of an eagle; two entire wings of an eagle; the heads of two woodpeckers; the head, neck, and breast of two ducks; a wildcat skin; a shell; two wooden bowls; a braid of buffalo hair; a braid of sweet grass; blue, green, and red clay; fat from a deer or buffalo, the animal having been consecrated; the nest of an oriole.

The clays, the fat, and the oriole's nest were furnished by the Ku'rahus. The nest was kept in secret and not allowed to be seen. All the articles except those furnished by the Ku'rahus were provided by the Father. Besides these he had to secure robes, ornamented garments, and regalia for the ceremonial clothing of the Son, his messenger, and his little child; also gifts to be bestowed on the entire party of the Children. He was assisted by contributions from the relatives and friends who had agreed to share with him the responsibilities and the rewards attending this ceremony. Food for the entertainment of the Children as well as for the maintenance of the Fathers during their absence from home had also to be provided.

It was the duty of the Son, the leader of the group called the Children, to provide a spacious lodge wherein the ceremony could take place, and also a proper camping site for all who accompanied the Fathers. He had also to secure the requisite return gifts to be made to the Fathers.

Each of the articles used in the ceremony had a general symbolism well known to the people, but their special significance was peculiar to these rites.

The feathered stem Haha'katittu (plate LXXXVI, page 38) was painted blue to symbolize the sky, the abode of Tira'wahut, the circle of the lesser powers. A long straight groove running its length was painted red, the symbol of life. The red groove was the path along which the spirits of the various birds traveled on their way to bring help.

Three split feathers from an eagle's wing were fastened to the stem as to an arrow, to give sure flight to the symbol-freighted stem. On it was tied the fan-shaped pendant of ten feathers from the mature brown or golden eagle. This eagle was called Kawas in the Hako ceremony. It represented the mother and led in certain of the rites. It is this feathered stem that was carried by the Ku'rahus. This eagle

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is consecrated to the powers; it soars near their abode and is a medium of communication between them and man. 796*

The woodpecker's head was fastened near the mouthpiece end of the feathered stem, the upper mandible turned back over the red crest and painted blue. This treatment of the upper mandible had a double significance. The red crest, which rises when the bird is angry, was here held down; it must not rise. The blue paint represented the clear, cloudless sky. The woodpecker has the favor of the storm gods and can avert from man the disaster of tempest and of lightning. The owl feathers were tied near the middle of the feathered stem. This bird has power to help and protect during the night. Soft blue feathers were fastened around the mouthpiece end. These blue feathers symbolized the clear sky, and it is this end which was always upward toward the abode of the powers. 778 [821 822 825]

The other end of the stem was thrust through the breast, neck, and mandibles of the duck. It was by this end that the feathered stem was held. The duck is familiar with the pathless air and water and is also at home on the land, knowing its streams and springs. It is the unerring guide.

The red and white streamers represented the sun and the moon, day and night. These were made of red cloth and dyed horsehair and white cotton cord, but it is said that formerly soft deerskin strips painted red and twisted hair from the white rabbit were used. [822]

The other feathered stem, Itahak'takaru (plate LXXXVII, page 40), differed from the first feathered stem already described in two particulars, namely, it was painted green, to symbolize the earth, and the fan-shaped pendant was made of seven tall feathers from the white eagle (the young brown or golden eagle; see page 208). This eagle was not consecrated. It represented the male, the father, the warrior, and the defender. This feathered stem was carried by the Ku'rahus's assistant, and it was never allowed to be next to the children; its place was always on the outside. There, it was explained, it could do no harm, could cause no contention, but would serve to protect and defend. [822]

I have many times remarked the reverence felt toward the feathered stems. Their sacred character seemed always to be remembered and they were never handled carelessly. During the entire time that I was engaged with Tahirûsawichi on this ceremony he never allowed the feathered stems to be placed on the floor or laid on a chair; they were always carefully deposited on the wildcat skin with a decorum that was not once abated. I have seen manifested among the tribes not only reverence toward these sacred symbols, but an affection that was not displayed toward any other objects. Few persons ever spoke to me of them without a brightening of the eyes. "They make us happy," was a common saying.

They were preserved intact and passed from tribe to tribe as long as they held together, and they were sometimes freshened and 178 778 796*

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[178] repaired. This transfer of the feathered stems from tribe to tribe
778 tended to preserve the model unchanged. Sometimes the Son did not
*796 care to part with the feathered stems left with him, so when he inaugurated a party and was to be the Father he had a new set made. It was a matter of pride with some not to use again feathered stems that had once seen service.

The ear of white corn (plate LXXXVIII, page 44), called Atira, Mother,[a] represented the fruitfulness of the earth. The tip end was [772] painted blue to represent the dome of the sky, the dwelling place of the 822 powers, and four blue equidistant lines, running halfway down the ear, were the four paths along which the powers descended to minister to man.

The two straight sticks cut from the plum tree were bound to the ear of corn by a braid of buffalo hair. One stick projected above the tip of the ear about a hand's breadth, and the other extended about the same length below the butt; the lower end of this stick was pointed so that it could be thrust into the ground to hold the ear of corn in an upright position. To the other stick was tied a white, downy eagle feather. This feather had a double significance: It represented the high, white clouds that float near the dome of the sky where the powers dwell, thus indicating their presence with the corn. It also stood for the tassel of the cornstalk. The feather here refers to the male principle, the corn to the female. The plum-tree wood was chosen for the sticks because the tree is prolific of fruit. It symbolized a prayer for abundance.

The braid of buffalo hair represented the animal which supplied food and clothing for the people.

The two gourd rattles (plate LXXXIX, page 46) represented the gift of the squash to man and the breast of the mother. Around the middle of each a blue circle was painted from which depended four equi- [772] distant lines of the same color. The circle represented the base of the dome of the sky, and the four lines the four paths descending therefrom to earth.

The crotched stick (plate XC, page 48) used to support one end of the feathered stems when they were laid at ceremonial rest was significant of the fork in the tree where the eagle builds its nest. The use of the plum tree for this crotched stick expressed the desire for many young in the nest.

The sacred ointment with which the plum-tree sticks were anointed [237] was made from the fat of the deer or buffalo mixed with red clay. The fat was taken from an animal that had been consecrated through certain prescribed rites which recognized man's dependence upon the powers for the gift of food. Fat symbolized plenty. Ritual songs speak of paths dropping fatness, referring to the trails made by those who carried the dressed meat from the hunting fields to the camp; such

[a] The common term for corn, mahas, was not used in the ceremony.

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a path would be strewn with drops of fat. Red is the color typical of life. The ointment signified a prayer for abundance and life.

The wildcat skin (plate XC, page 48) served as a covering for those objects when they were to be wrapped up and it was always spread on the ground for them to rest on.

The significance of the wildcat in this ceremony is of peculiar interest. This animal, we are told, never misses his prey, never fails to attain the object of his pursuit, and accomplishes this end quietly, tactfully, without arousing antagonism. From conversations with the Ku'rahus it became clear that it was those qualities and not the savageness and stealthily cruelty of the animal that were to be kept in mind. To be able to accomplish a purpose without offending, without raising opposition, seems to have been regarded as the special attribute vouchsafed by Tira'wa to the wildcat. It is because of this attribute that it was chosen to be always with the sacred objects during this ceremony. The sacred objects symbolized not only an appeal from man to certain powers, but the presence of the powers themselves, while the nature of the appeal, a desire for children, long life, and plenty, was such that the enjoyment of the benefits craved must depend largely on the successful exercise by man of those qualities which were regarded as characteristic of the wildcat. So the skin of the wildcat was the cover of the sacred objects when they were wrapped up; it was spread on the ground as their guard and support when they were laid at ceremonial rest, and when they were carried about the lodge during the ceremony it was borne by the chief, who walked between the Kurahus and his assistant, each of whom held a feathered stem.

Only a chief could carry the wildcat skin and the ear of corn. Therefore, if the Father was not himself a chief he had to secure the services of one in order that the wildcat could be borne by a man possessing the authority of a ruler in the tribe. As the wildcat stood for the ability to accomplish a purpose with tact and without exciting opposition, qualities essential to the successful ruler, it would seem that the imperative association of the wildcat with a chief was intended to convey the idea that only under the administration of such a man could the tribe have internal peace and enjoy the abundance and prosperity represented by Mother Corn.

As every article belonging to the ceremony and the position and movements of those who conducted the rites had a special significance, the position given to the wildcat, as explained by the Kurahus, reveals the mind of the native in regard to this animal, which figures conspicuously in other rites and ceremonies, and which controls one of the sacred shrines of the Chaui band of the Pawnee tribe.

TIME OF THE CEREMONY

There was no stated time for the performance of the Hako ceremony. It was not connected with planting or harvesting, hunting, or war, or any tribal festival. The Ku'rahus said, "We take up the Hako in

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66 Ho-o-o-o!
67 H'areri, h'areri. He!
68 H'areri, h'areri, h'areri, 'reri, h'areri. He!
69 H'areri, h'areri. He!
70 'Reri, h'areri, h'areri, 'reri, h'areri. He!
71 H'areri, h'areri. He!

Translation

66 Ho-o-o-o! An introductory exclamation.
67 H'areri, h'areri. He!
h', an aspiration, symbolic of a breathing forth, as the giving of breath so that a thing may live.
areri, a part of the word irariwi, a particular place. The change of the h in the final syllable of the word to r when the abbreviation areri is sung is for ease of utterance and euphony.
h'areri. Translated above.
he! a part of the exclamation i'hare! meaning I think upon, I give heed to the significance of the act which accompanies this song. The change of the initial r in the last syllable of the word to an h, making it he, is for euphony.
68 H'areri, h'areri, h'areri, 'reri, h'areri. He!
H'areri, h'areri, h'areri. See line 67.
'reri, a part of the abbreviation areri, translated above.
h'areri. He! See line 67.
69 See line 67.
70 'Reri, h'areri, h'areri, 'reri, h'areri. He! See lines 67 and 68.
71 See line 67.

Explanation by the Ku'rahus

Blue is the color of the sky, the dwelling place of Tira'wahut, that great circle of the powers which watch over man. As the man paints the stick blue we sing. We ask as we sing that life be given to this symbol of the dwelling place of Tira'wa.

When the man has completed the painting of the stick he hands it to the Ku'rahus, who has already mixed red clay with water from a running stream in a shell, and he paints the straight groove red. This groove is the path along which the spirits of all the things that are to be put upon this stick of ash may travel as they go forth to give their help during this ceremony. "H'areri" is a prayer that the symbol may have life.

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We paint the groove red because the passageway is red through which man's breath comes and goes to give him life. The sun, too, is red, and the groove represents the straight path whereon the sun shines, the path which man must travel if he would live in peace and prosper. The teachings of this ceremony make a straight path along which if a man walks he will receive help from the powers.

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74 Ii'areri, 'hare! I'hare re! Ii'areri. All the words are translated above. See lines 72 and 73.

75 Hure-e! An abbreviation of the word haurae, coming from above. The vowel changes and prolongation are for greater ease in singing and also for euphony.

76, 77 See lines 74, 75.

Explanation by the Ku'rahus

The color green represents Toharu (Vegetation), the covering of Ii'U'raru, Mother Earth. As we sing, we ask that life be breathed into the symbol, that it may have power as we use these sacred articles. "Ii'areri" is a prayer that living power may be where we place this symbol of the covering of Mother Earth. We remember as we sing that the power of Mother Earth to bring forth comes from above, "Hure-e."

The Ku'rahus paints the groove red in the same way, for the same reason as on the other ash stick, and when he has finished he hands the green stem back to the man on his right, toward the south, who holds it.

The Ku'rahus rubs upon his hands the sacred ointment which has been made by mixing red clay with fat from a deer or buffalo that has been consecrated to Tira'wa. He is now ready to tie the symbolic articles upon the two painted stems.

He splits long feathers, taken from the wings of an eagle, and glues them to each stem as feathers are glued upon the shaft of an arrow. He uses for this purpose pitch from the pine tree. These wing feathers are to remind us that the eagle flies near to Tira'wa.

About one end of the stem (the mouthpiece) he fastens soft blue feathers, in color like the sky where the powers dwell. He ties a woodpecker's head on the stem near the mouthpiece and turns the upper mandible back upon the red crest. The mandible covers the red crest and keeps it from rising. This shows that the bird may not be angry. The inner side of the mandible, which is exposed by being turned back upon the crest, is painted blue, to show that Tirawa is looking down upon the open bill as the spirit of the bird travels along the red groove to reach the people.

About the middle of the stem the Ku'rahus binds feathers from the owl. The other end of the stem he thrusts through the breast, neck, and mandibles of the duck, the breast reaching to the owl feathers. The end of the stem protrudes a very little through the bill of the duck, so that the bowl of a pipe could be fitted to it. The duck's head, therefore, is always downward, looking toward the earth and the water.

All the birds on the stems are leaders: the eagle is chief of the day; the owl is chief of the night; the woodpecker is chief of the trees; the duck is chief of the water.

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VI

1169 Ho-o-o!
1171 Hiri! 'Hari; Hiri! Kitapahat ri ta witahpa ha!
1172 Hiri! 'Hari; Hiri! Kitapahat ri ta witahpa ha!
1173 Hiri! 'Hari; Hiri! Kitapahat ri ta witahpa ha.

Translation of First Stanza

1170 Ho-o-o! An introductory exclamation.
1171 Hiri! 'Hari; Hiri! Kitapahat we ro kusi hi!
hiri! give heed!
'hari, a part of iha'ri, child.
hiri! give heed!
kitapahat; kita, from kitau, water; pahat, red. The term means red paint.
we, now.
ro, am.
kusi, sitting.
hi! from hiri! give heed!
1172, 1173 See line 1171.

Explanation by the Ku'rahus

[386] The Ku'rahus had prepared the paint by mixing red clay with running water. He mixes it rather dry so that what is left can remain in the shell. Only the right half of a shell can be used to hold the paint. You remember what I told you of the shell and why we use it (first ritual, part II). The red clay we use for paint was made by Tira'wa for this purpose.

[822] The paint symbolizes the red cloud of the dawn, the coming of the new day, the rising sun, the vigor [illegible]. The power of the new day, the new life, is now standing before [illegible].

Translation of Second Stanza

1174 Ho-o-o! An introductory exclamation.
1175 Hiri! 'Hari; Hiri! Kitapahat re ru ata ha!
hiri! give heed!
'hari, a part of iha'ri, child.
hiri! give heed!
kitapahat, red paint.
re, is.
ru, it.
ata, flying.
ha! behold!
1176, 1177 See line 1175.

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Translation of First Stanza

*539 1194 Ho-o-o! An introductory exclamation.
*796 1195 Hiri! 'Hari; Hiri! Awi kots we ro hre kusi hi!
hiri! give heed!
'hari, a part of iha'ri, child.
hiri! harken!
awi, a part of awiu, a picture.
kots, a part of rekots, whitish; as a thin cloud through which one can see a tinge of the blue sky beyond. Light blue.
we, now.
ro, am.
hre, holding.
kusi, sitting.
hi! from hiri! give heed!
1196, 1197 See line 1195.

Explanation by the Ku'rahus

[822] Blue represents the sky, the place where Tira'wa atius dwells, and with this blue paint we are to make upon the child a picture of the face of Tira'wa atius. It is a mark of Tira'wa atius' acceptance of the consecrated child and a sign of his presence. The symbol of the dwelling place of Tira'wa atius stands before the child.

Translation of Second Stanza

1198 Ho-o-o! An introductory exclamation.
1199 Hiri! 'Hari; Hiri! Awi kots we ro ru ats ha!
hiri! harken!
'hari, a part of iha'ri, child.
hiri! give heed!
awi, a part of awiu, a picture.
kots, light blue (paint).
we, now.
ro, is.
ru, it.
ats, flying.
ha! behold!
1200, 1201 See line 1199.

Explanation by the Ku'rahus

While we sing the second stanza the old man moves the shell containing the blue paint toward the child. The blue of the sky where Tira'wa atius dwells is coming near, descending through the air.

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417 proximately the size of the wrapper of a sacred bundle
782 when fully unfolded. The floor of the excavation was
796 then covered with white, downy feathers. This pit was called *kusaru*, and represented the garden which the Evening Star kept in the west, or, according to another account, the reproductive organs of the Evening Star. The white feathers with which it was lined symbolized the milk of women and animals and the juice of young corn. After the pit had been completed, the holes for the uprights of the scaffold were dug by two young girls.

While the digging was going on, the party sent after the timbers had returned. The two uprights of the scaffold were first erected, then each cross-bar was tied on by a warrior from the village of the direction which it represented. Before tying it, the warrior would recount some deed. One would say, "I made a sacrifice of meat and carried it to the priest on my back. After the ceremony was performed, the priest whispered to me, 'You, young man, have brought meat here by means of the pack string. You will have an opportunity before the summer is over to lasso a pony in the enemy's country. The gods now know you. Do not fear to go on the war path.' I went. We found a village, and others became afraid and ran. I went east by myself and found the enemy's horses. I went among them and found one with an eagle-wing fan tied to its tail. I captured it and rode home. Since then I have made many sacrifices." The top cross-bar was tied by two men each of whom had made a sacrifice, but these did not recount any adventures in war.

It is probable that the scaffold was also painted at this time, although the ceremonies connected with the painting are not remembered. The two uprights were painted red and black, the former symbolizing
[822] day, and the latter, night. The lowest cross-bar was

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black, and symbolized the northeast; and its animal guardian, the bear. The second was red, symbolizing the southeast and the wolf. The third was yellow, symbolizing the northwest and the mountain lion; and the fourth white, symbolizing the southwest and the wildcat. The top cross-bar represented the west, and was painted blue or black and white, symbolizing clouds and rain.

By the time the scaffold was completed, it was about sunset, and the people dispersed. All spectators were sent out of the lodge, and the door was closed. The chief priest then drew upon the floor of the lodge four circles, one for each of the world quarters, and outlined them with white downy feathers. Each of these circles represented a region penetrated by the Morning Star in his search for the Evening Star and also the magic animal which he had overcome there. The white feathers symbolized the foam about their mouths when they attacked him. When the circles had been made, the spectators were re-admitted, and the priests sang a song descriptive of the journey of the Morning Star, while the chief priest danced around the lodge with a war club, destroying the circles one by one. When the song was finished, he straightened up and said, "Chiefs, priests, warriors, old men, I have destroyed the regions once controlled by the mysterious woman who wanted darkness forever. These animals were under her control, when the Morning Star traveled in darkness looking for her. She placed an obstacle in the southeast, which was controlled by the wolf. The Morning Star destroyed this obstacle, but preserved the mysterious animal. He continued his journey, traveled to the southwest, and again met an obstacle which he destroyed, but preserved the animal, a wildcat. He continued his journey, and when he came to the northwest, he again met an obstacle. He des-

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deep, the bottom to be covered with soft down feathers. The pit symbolized the Garden of the Evening Star from which all life originates. The pit was called *Kusaru*, which in Pawnee simply means bed.

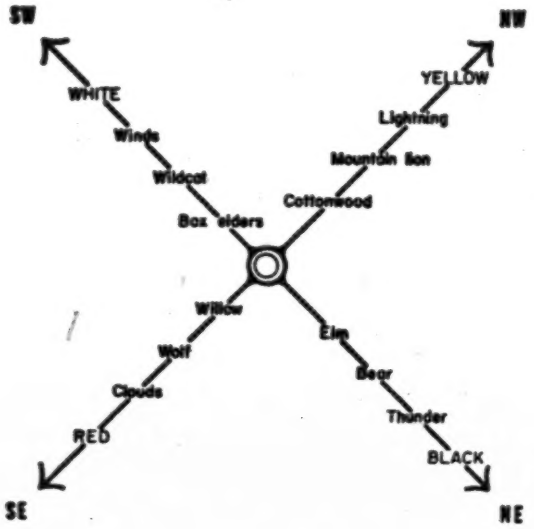

FIGURE 10-1. Association of symbolisms for the four semicardinal directions: colors, natural forces, animals, trees.

In the ceremonial lodge, the dancing and singing continued on the fourth day. Whenever they ate during the ceremonies, the girl was served, and once in a while she was taken out to walk around, always accompanied by Wolf man. The main theme of the fourth day was the destruction of the four semicardinal circles in the appropriate order as Morning Star had done in the creation as he warred on the Evening Star. The priest, impersonating the Morning Star wore leggings decorated with scalps. First he arose and sang and danced around the north side, then the south side, then back to the altar. He danced around the lodge again and when he arrived at the east he whirled around suddenly and destroyed the northeast circle scattering the white feathers around the lodge, then the southwest, the northwest, and the southeast circles, making a grunting sound each time as if attacking an enemy. Then all sang the fifth song and the girl was taken to the altar to be costumed for her last role.

Her body was painted, red on the right side, black on the left, the red to symbolize day, the time of the Morning Star, and the black to

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represent night, the time of the Evening Star. She wore a skirt and a painted hide robe around her shoulders. Now they sang of the origin of the Morning Star itself that they thought had come from a meteor. They sang to the girl, "You are now wearing the covering of meteorite grandfather," and in the next song, "You are now wearing the covering of the meteorite father," and then, "You are now wearing the covering of the meteorite brother." They completed her costume with a row of feathers standing up erect along the median line of her head. Her costume complete, she sat down in her place next to the Wolf man. They sang until midnight and then they paused, awaiting the time of the Morning Star. Meanwhile they placed a pinch of tobacco before the altar and sang about flint, the meteorite grandfather and other Morning Star symbols. Thereafter they would have to address their songs to the Morning Star in the sky. During the pause, once in a while the visionary took up the four direction poles from the fireplace and pointed them at the girl as he had done before in the prescribed succession: northeast, and so on.

Now the procession to the scaffold would begin. All the men and boys and even male infants were to participate in the sacrifice. During the day, one of the priests had climbed up to the roof of the earth lodge and called out, alerting them to be prepared with their bows and arrows. In the ceremonial lodge, the priest gave the war leader the braided elk-hide ropes to tie on the girl's wrists. He took up the gourd rattles. It was almost daylight. The four priests of the four direction bundles had gone out to dress, each being assisted by a specially designated person to adjust their costumes and to get ready. The Northwest man (Yellow Tent) wore two owlskins on his back that he had taken from his bundle; in his hand he held the bow he took from the Skull bundle and a red arrow that he had added to it. The Southeast bundle man (Red Tent) also had two owls and took a stick with coals on the end. The Southwest bundle priest (White-Mother-Born-Again) had two owls also and he took a war club. The fourth priest, representing the Big Black Meteoric Star (black, northeast) who also wore two owlskins on his back, took the flint knife.

Now all sang and started on the procession, the girl and the Wolf man in the lead followed by the visionary-war leader dressed in his otter collar, his otter belt with sixty-five scalps, his pipe, and other regalia and the four direction priests in their costumes.

The dawn was coming and the scaffold was ready. Slowly the procession went toward it. As they went they sang four songs. The girl looked around and wondered. The first song said, "She was looking around for just a little time." Then they sang of Heaven and of the powers of the bear, the mountain lion, the wildcat, and the wolf as the girl approached the scaffold. The Wolf man urged her to mount and as she

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placed in each bundle, each wrapped up and sewed into a covering—the winter ear in a tanned buffalo skin and the ear dedicated to summer in a buffalo-heart skin. Each individual ear of these holy corns in the bundles had a different name by which it was addressed. Early in April before the *Awari* or planting ritual, a ritual was held in which the seeds of the holy corn were distributed to the keepers of the sacred bundles so that their wives could plant them in their fields. At harvest time, when these sacred ears were mature, the old ears were removed from the bundles and replaced with ears from the new crop. Fine examples of some of the best ears of the more common varieties were also placed in the sacred bundles at harvest time, particularly those with a male spike. Compared with the white flour corn, the holy corn, which was also white, had small kernels that sometimes covered the cob to the very tip. "Sometimes it has something like a soft feather at the tip of the ear." This is apparently the male spike at the point end; archaeologically it appears very early, 4,445 ± 180 B.C., in the tiny ancestral corncobs taken from La Perra Cave in northeast Mexico. Such an ear is also shown in the headdress and hands of the Maize God on a prehistoric Zapotec funerary urn from Mexico (Mangelsdorf, 1958).

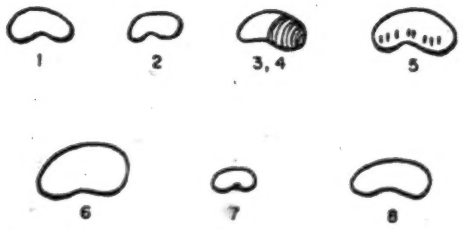

FIGURE 11-2. Eight varieties of beans, generically known to the Pawnees as *atit:* (1) *ati-pahat*, "bean-red"; a large sized bean. (2) *atik-taka*, "bean-white." (3) *ati-paks-katit*, "bean-head-black"; black-head beans. (4) *ait-paks-pahat*, "bean-head-red"; same as (3). (5) *ati-pirari*, "bean-spotted"; color of a spotted horse, spotted all around, some with red, some with black spots; a somewhat large-sized bean. (6) *ati-katus*, "bean-flat"; large, flat bean. (7) *atit-tiwats-katit*, "bean-navel-black"; spotted where it joins the stem; navel, *-riwat*, phonetically altered in the context. (8) *ati-taxkata*, "bean-yellow"; a rather large yellow bean.

Our classification of the species of corn is based on the starch content, but when a Pawnee was asked to name the varieties of corn they had, he or she would enumerate them in terms of color categories—black, spotted, white, yellow, and red. It is interesting that these represent the varieties of flour corn that they had. However, in classifying their corn, they subsumed the flint, sweet, and sacred varieties under these color categories. When asked to name the varieties of Pawnee corn, Mark Evarts

243 778 776 793 [782] harvest offering. Then the women left the lodge and the ceremony was carried on entirely by the men. Now a man was sent to the sacred corn hill to uproot any stalks that remained there with the ears still on them. They were tied to the northwest post of the lodge, which symbolized the Garden of the Gods. When the new winter direction priest was installed at the end of the proceedings, he would receive these as a sign of his office.

The priest was now ready to conduct the ceremony. He sat at the west with his bundle open before him. He put aside the stick with the Young Mother Corn Plant tied to it that they had made in the spring and the two sacred ears in their respective wrappings. He also had before him the four new sacred ears that were brought in that morning. The new sacred ears had been cut with the first section of the stem left on to symbolize the windpipe and the voice of the Mother Corn which was the "breath of life." After singing four songs mentioning the different [822] [533] colors, black, red, yellow, and white for the semicardinal directions, he sang a fifth song and cut off the stem. Then he sang another song welcoming the new Mother Corn. He embraced the new ear, passing it to the other priests who were sitting to the south and to the north of him, and then passed it down the south side and then the north of the lodge, everyone in turn embracing the new Mother Corn. When the ear was returned to the priest, he sang a seventh song stating that the voice of the corn was raised to the heavens.

[782] At the close of the songs, the pipe was filled and the mouthpiece pointed toward Mother Corn as an offering to share in the smoking. Then the ear was passed to the people on each side of the lodge and each person blew his breath on it four times, symbolizing its new life in the world.

The next symbolic act was to concentrate all the power in the world into Mother Corn herself. The priest took a buffalo-hair rope about a yard long from his sacred bundle. It was said to have been made of "hair from beneath the waters." Taking one of the new Mother Corn ears in each hand, he knelt before the altar holding the ends of the rope against the ears. Then moving his hands, he made the rope circle around into a loop to represent the horizon as it had circled out from the gods in the west during the original creation. He now made movements as if he were throwing the rope over objects and drawing them to his breast. This was spoken of as "trapping the powers of the Heavens" for Mother Corn and all the sacred objects.

The ears of sacred corn whose "lives had been ended" were now given over to a distinguished warrior, who would carry them on the warpath to guide him to success, or to the entrepreneur of the Peace Pipe Ceremony, who would carry them on his expedition to give him success in trade and international relations.